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BETHEL HISTORICAL SOCIETY



View of the Old Grover Hill Cemetery, where some of Bethel's earliest residents are buried.

OLD GROVER HILL ROAD

by Polly Davis

Editor's note: An earlier version of this paper was given at the October 1993 monthly meeting of the Society. It has been revised and expanded for this issue.

Prior to presenting the historical data on the Old Grover Hill Road, sincere thanks are extended to all who contributed facts, stories, pictures and time to the project: Ethel Chapman and daughter Reenie, Mark Bennett, Ruel Swain, Randy Bennett, Allan Fraser, Neil Merrill, Louise Annis, my husband Bob who spent many days helping in the research of old deeds at the Registry in South Paris, to the many people contacted by phone, and last, but certainly not least, Oscar Annis who toured photographer Stan Howe and me along the unpaved area of the old road on a modern rough-terrain vehicle.

References included Lapham's *History of Bethel*, Randall Bennett's *Bethel, Maine: An Illustrated History*, items from the *Bethel Oxford County Citizen*, a few town tax maps, and Bethel maps of 1858, 1880 and 1911.

Three buildings built in the early or mid-1800s remain today (1994), and only one person (Ethel Chapman of West Bethel) was located who remembered early history or stories about them.

THE OLD GROVER HILL ROAD

The Old Grover Hill Road, once referred to as Cross Road and in 1993 renamed Annis road, extends approximately one mile from the present MacMunn property, located on

Route 2 at the entrance to the old road, south to the sharp turn located on the eastern side of the present-day Grover Hill Road, on land now owned on both sides by P.H. Chadbourne Company. Pavement extends to the present Annis home, and beyond that it remains a little-used, narrow logging road. The road was discontinued as a thruway to the Grover Hill Road on May 10, 1902.

The earliest plan of Bethel, the Sudbury Canada land grant map of 1768, places the road somewhere near the middle of lots 27 and 28 in the 5th range of lots which were purchased by Deacon James Grover on the rights of Josiah Twitchell soon after the Revolution. An item written by Leonard Bond Chapman and printed in *The Oxford County Citizen* of June 29, 1909, lists names of settlers in 1800 in the West Parish of Bethel; included is mention of the Reverend Daniel Gould property (now owned by the MacMunns) at the north end of the road "up past the old cemetery to Grover Hill to Elijah Grover's and Jedediah Grover's." More detailed accounts of the last two farms will come later in this report.

HENRY AND ELEANOR MACMUNN

Leonard Bond Chapman, in another item in the *Citizen* of June 24, 1909, writes: "On May 20, 1817, Parson Gould sold for a consideration of \$800 his Bethel homestead farm now known as the 'Aaron Cross place' located in the southeasterly corner made by the road turning towards the old burying place from the West Bethel Road..."

The Reverend Gould, for whom Gould Academy was named, on May 20, 1817, sold to Dr. John Grover his one-story home situated on 185 acres located on both sides of the old road. For a consideration of \$2,010, in 1841, Dr. Grover sold the farmstead to Jesse Cross, who, in 1843, divided it between his two sons, Aaron and Jonathan. For the purpose of clarification, the history of the Aaron Cross home will be outlined.

Aaron Cross received the one-story former Gould house and surrounding land, and then relocated the buildings across the road somewhere east of the old Dr. Wiley/Crosby place. It is not known exactly where or how long the house existed. Cross built the present two-story farm house, known to old timers as the Tom Vashaw place and recently inherited by Michael Witter from his uncle, Andy Witter.

The second parcel, Jonathan Cross' portion, is now the present MacMunn home. According to an article by Leonard Bond Chapman: "Dr. Wiley came into a half (or

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the whole) of the Cross estate upon a foreclosed mortgage." An 1869 deed confirms that Lydia Wiley and Matilda Cross mortgaged the property to Daniel Coffin, who sold same to John Phillips (listed on the 1880 map) in 1871. Subsequent owners in chronological order were George and Elvira Kimball (1881) and Charles Merrill (1898). Ellen Merrill, widow of Charles, deeded the property to son Wallace (father of Charles, Neil, Connie and Ralph) in 1934 and designated he must "provide food, drink, nursing, medical attention and a well-lighted separate room at his expense and maintain her as a member of his family and see to it that she received kindly treatment at all times..." If he failed to fulfill such requirements, the real estate would revert to her two daughters, Grace Philbrook and Vera Stevens. Wallace and his wife Nora could neither hear nor orally converse but very adeptly reared and disciplined four children through the use of sign language. Wallace sold the land and buildings to Spurgeon and Harriet Luxton in 1938 and moved to his newly constructed home directly across the old road. More recent owners of the old Cross place have been: Lauren and Ada Lord (1945), Edward and Georgia Haines (same year, 1945), and present owners Henry and Eleanor MacMunn (1983). The MacMunn's make and sell wooden crafts, such as lawn ornaments, bird houses, etc., as well as deal in antiques.

CHARLES AND CAROLINE MERRILL

As stated previously, directly across the old road and located at the north entrance of the road from Route 2 is the former Wallace and Nora Merrill home (1938). George and Connie Merrill Brown moved to the house after the death of her father in 1948 and were deeded the property in 1956 by the remaining children and her mother as heirs. Nora and son Ralph ("Jug") moved into a small trailer near the south end of the house and resided there until her demise in 1964. Children of the Browns, twin sons David and Dean and son Michael, inherited the estate in 1988 and deeded it to Charles (an uncle) and Caroline Merrill in July 1990. Francis Boynton, SAD #44 principal, and his wife and family rented the place from the Merrills during 1991-1994; Cheri Mason and family live there at this writing and a "For Sale" sign has been placed on the lawn.

SWAIN FIELD

Adjoining the Merrill land on the south is a large field owned by Ruel Swain. Located on the hill at the West Bethel end of the field was a ski jump maintained by Gould Academy in the 1930s.

MICHAEL AND GAIL WITTER

Situated across the old road on the Bethel side are a house and two mobile homes owned by Michael and Gail Witter. Tenants of the front mobile home have been Aubrey and Sheila Daye, Dawn Daye, Scott Braman of Maine Handicapped Ski Center, and David Daye (1994). The second mobile home was enlarged and refurbished in 1994 and is occupied by Aubrey and Sheila Daye.

Mike and Gail started building their new home shortly after the land was purchased from Henry and Eleanor MacMunn in October 1987.

GAYLAND AND MARY DOOEN

Adjacent to the Witters' land on the same side of the old road are two mobile homes and the house of Gayland ("Gink"), retired Bethel postmaster, and Mary (Key Bank teller) Dooen. Mary's father, Norman Ford, makes his

home in the smaller facility which is owned by the Dooens. The second, a larger mobile home with attached roof and room addition at the entrance, has been owned since 1977 by Avis Dooen, Gink's mother.

Mary indicated that their home was started in 1968 on land obtained from Edward Haines, and it was not completed until two years later. The Dooens are the parents of four daughters: Robin Gundersen, Gail Wight, Kelly Scott and Cherie Dooen.

MARK AND CHARLOTTE BENNETT

Across the old road from the Dooen's property is the attractive, modular home of Mark and Charlotte Bennett. It was placed on land, previously owned by Mark's mother, Blanche, in 1975. Its closely mown lawns and beautiful flowers throughout the summer and the array of brightly colored lights at Christmas time lend a cheery sight to anyone in the vicinity. Mark maintains a popular upholstery business on the premises. They have a son and daughter, Troy and Barbara.

GROVER HILL CEMETERY

The next location going south on the old road beside the Dooens' driveway is the Grover Hill Cemetery. One of the most interesting gravestones in this cemetery is that of James Mills, who died in 1790. Randall Bennett, in his recent publication, *Bethel, Maine: An Illustrated History*, notes: "He (James Mills) was engaged in felling trees near Grover Hill, when one of them fell and instantly killed him. At age 30, Mills became the first Sudbury Canada citizen to be killed by accident on June 30, 1790."

A stone exists for one of Bethel's first settlers, Lt. Jonathan Clark, who came to Bethel in 1774 and who died December 25, 1821, at age 75. Also inscribed on the same stone are names of his children: Jonathan, 5 months (1784), Ebenezer, 5 years (1786), and Mary, 1 year (1792).

Many of the prominent early settlers and their children in the West Parish of Bethel who were interred in the cemetery in the late 1790s and early 1800s were: Lt. Jonathan Clark's wife Esther (1815); Benjamin Clark, 43 (1802); Elijah Grover, 36, second husband of James Mills' wife Hannah (1805); Deacon James Grover, 77 (1805), and Betsey Barker, first wife of Deacon Samuel Barker (1812).

Many stones dating from the 1800s contain inscribed names such as: Wheeler, Grover, Barker, Lyon, Ethridge, Annis, Bryant, Mills, Heath, Cross, and Gerrish, to name only a few. Ted Swan was the last person to be buried in a plot in the northeast corner in 1976.

Ethel Chapman remembers stories about her great-grandfather digging and moving coffins and relaying that he felt some of the people had been alive when buried due to hands entwined in the hair on their heads.

RAYMOND AND MARY MORGAN

Partially hidden by trees near the road and on a knoll across from the Grover Hill Cemetery are two homes, the first owned by Raymond and Mary Morgan and the second owned by Frank and Terry Petillo (Raymond's sister).

In the early 1800s, the land of these two sites was a part of the Cyrus Harden farm. Throughout the ensuing years these parcels saw many owners.

A small camp-like, shingled structure was situated on the present Morgan lot in 1941 and Alice Herrick, mother of Bertha Stevens, lived there with her daughter, Rose Herrick Wright Rand, through the late 1940s. No date was

found indicating when the cabin was erected. Mrs. Herrick added a shed and additional room while there. They relocated to Locke Mills in 1945, and Lynn Bennett moved his foster mother, Hattie Vail, into this small place the same year. Malcolm Bennett, grandson of Mrs. Vail and brother of Mark, deeded it to Leo Witter in November, 1966. Leo razed the little house and built the present Morgan home. He conveyed the property to his brother, Glynn, and moved in with brother Andy, owner of the former Vashaw place, in the late 1960s. Richard and Fran Tyler owned the property in 1970 and John T. ("Ted") and Christine Grover bought same, in 1971, by paying off two mortgages held by two different banks and by paying back taxes to the town of Bethel. The Grovers then purchased the second parcel of land and rented the property to their daughter, Linda Morgan, in 1971, to their daughter Donna in 1974, and to Greg Merrill in the late 1970s. The Morgans acquired the property in 1983.

FRANK AND MARY PETILLO

Frank and Mary Petillo bought the original second parcel of land mentioned above from her brother, Raymond Morgan, in July 1987 and moved into their newly constructed home in 1988.

LLOYD AND RITA SWEETSER

The small home on the east side of the road beyond the Grover Hill Cemetery was built in 1962 by Glynn and Carolyn Daye Witter on land formerly owned by Andy Witter. They owned and operated a small fast food, take-out place at the location of the present Breaux's, also on land of Glynn's uncle Andy Witter. The Bethel Savings Bank foreclosed on both properties in 1973 and sold it to Lloyd and Rita Sweetser in June 1976. The Sweetsters added a two-car garage in 1992, a second floor and new siding in 1993 and a storage barn in 1994. They have two sons.

BRADLEY AND JUDITH BARKER

The mobile home situated across the road from the Sweetser's home was moved onto the lot in 1988 by Rick and Melissa Osgood on land acquired of Malcolm Bennett that same year. The Osgoods sold the property in 1990 to Brad and Judy Barker, who utilize it as rental property. Renters have been Bernice Caddigan and Christa Mattson.

RUEL AND MAUREEN SWAIN

The real estate on the Bethel side of the old road, now owned by Ruel and Maureen Swain, is bounded by the Sweetser's line on the north and extends to the Annis property on the south. This was originally three separate lots which now contain a house and two mobile homes (1994).

The house dates back to the late 1870s and, according to Ethel Chapman, was constructed by her grandfather George Bryant, who was a carpenter by trade. George Bryant and his wife Augusta had four children, three of whom were born in the house. Augusta Bryant moved to Mechanic Falls after the death of her husband in 1900. By quit claim deed dated September 30, 1907, she deeded the house and land to her stepfather, Augustus Lamere, who owned the adjacent property at that time. After 1907 the place was owned by Everett and Ruby McKeen (1909), and Elias Robinson (1911) - the house was rented at times during his ownership to Tom Kennagh and Archie Little. Lancelot Veinot owned it in 1927. Ethel remembers the house was vacant at about that time. The next owner was Hattie Vail (1929), who deeded it to her foster son, Lynn Bennett, on October 4, 1945, and moved to the cabin

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

The Bethel Historical Society continues to thrive and prosper thanks in large part to the generosity and support of its members. The Society's outlook for the future is bright and our goals are ambitious. As interest in the Society has grown, acquisitions and the need to expand have, too. Currently the Long Range Planning Committee is looking at ways to answer the questions of space for display, storage and research. We are confident that these problems will be solved.

We are very proud of Dr. Howe's recently published book, *A Fair Field and No Favor: A Concise History of the Maine State Grange* and are anxiously awaiting Curator Randall H. Bennett's editing of the Richardson Lakes book which will be available in 1995. Both publications demonstrate the vitality and importance of the Bethel Historical Society.

We are extremely grateful to all our dedicated volunteers and staff for their tireless efforts to maintain the high standards of our organization. We hope to continue to receive this support as we will need even greater efforts if we are to successfully enter the 21st century.

Charles F. Raymond

across the road. Lynn transferred the property to his wife Blanche in 1967, and she sold it to Ruel and Maureen Swain in 1971. The Bennetts had five children: Malcolm, Kennard, Mark and twin daughters Jane and Joann. Renters of this property since the Swain's ownership have been: Chris Knoder, Joan Davis, Les and Chris Otten of Sunday River fame, Chuck Osgood of Casco Bank, and more recently Earlon Waterhouse (current resident in 1994). New siding is nearly completed at this writing (1994).

The next lot of the Swain property, previously owned by Euberto Brown, contains two mobile homes, the first owned by the Swains (1994) and rented to Verlie Mason, who succeeded Albert McPherson shortly after his admission to a nursing home. The second and larger mobile home was placed on Swain land by Jeff Littlehale in 1977. Shortly after his marriage to Terry Wight, the home was deeded to his brother-in-law Brad Wight. Brad and Brenda (his bride) bought the Shaw place on Robinson Hill and sold the mobile home to Mike and Tia Dunn. The present owner and resident is Tim Akers.

The 1858 map of Bethel shows a "shop" on this section of property (an old photograph shows a large blacksmith shop at this site). It is not known to whom the business belonged nor when it was established. A reference was found in a deed, dated June 25, 1874, when Samuel Philbrook sold the property to Augustus Lamere, a blacksmith by trade and the stepgreat-grandfather of Ethel Chapman. Another deed states that Aaron Cross sold an adjacent lot, approximately at the rear of the Lamere lot, to Jane Penet and Mary Lamere, wife of Augustus Lamere. The names "Ponnett and Lamere" are listed on the 1880 map of Bethel, and Ethel Chapman remembers hearing about the Ponnett and Lamere blacksmith shop. Jane Penet Wilber apparently married and shortly thereafter conveyed the premises to Augustus Lamere in September 1907. The old shop was renovated into a small residence

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SOCIETY SALES DEPARTMENT

The Society maintains a selection of modestly priced gifts and historical publications. These may be ordered at the prices listed below. Maine residents should include 6% sales tax. Orders under \$10 should include \$1 for postage and handling; those over \$10 but under \$20 should include \$2 and all those over \$20 should include \$3 for postage and handling.

Moses Mason House Tile	\$3.50
Stationery (package of ten sheets and ten envelopes)	\$2 ea.
Moses Mason House	Bethel Railroad Station
Summer House	Bethel Covered Bridge

Booklets

"The Family Farm"	75¢
"Made in Bethel"	75¢
"Dr. Moses Mason and His House"	\$1
"Molly Ockett"	\$2

Maps and Atlases

1880 Map of Bethel Hill	\$2
1880 Map of Entire Town (Bethel)	\$2
1878 Bird's Eye View of Bethel Hill	\$1
1858 Atlas of Oxford County	\$7.50

Tote Bag (Moses Mason Museum logo) sm. \$7.50 lg. \$11.50

Placemats, 4 Season (set of four) \$7.50

Books

Carrie Wight, A HISTORY OF NEWRY	\$5
Hutchinson, THE RUMFORD FALLS & RANGELEY LAKES RAILROAD	\$20
BETHEL, MAINE CEMETERIES	\$9.50
Russell, INDIAN NEW ENGLAND BEFORE THE MAYFLOWER	\$15.95
N.F. Little, AMERICAN DECORATIVE WALL PAINTING 1700-1850	\$9.95
R. Crosby, FROM AN OLD LEATHER TRUNK	\$5
W.B. Lapham, HISTORY OF WOODSTOCK, MAINE	\$19.95
THE WHITE MOUNTAINS: PLACE & PERCEPTIONS	\$9.95
Bennett, THE WHITE MOUNTAINS	\$14.99
D.B. Wight, WILD RIVER WILDERNESS	\$4
Francis Parkman, THE GOULD ACADEMY STORY	\$7.50
MAINE IN THE EARLY REPUBLIC	\$29.95
Thomas Hubka, BIG HOUSE, LITTLE HOUSE, BACK HOUSE BARN: THE CONNECTED FARM BUILDINGS OF NEW ENGLAND	Paper \$22.95. Cloth \$35
Bennett, BETHEL, MAINE: AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY	\$39.95
M.F. King, ANNALS OF OXFORD	\$48
R. Crosby, I WAS A SUMMER BOARDER	\$5
Howe, MAINE GRANGE HISTORY	\$19.95
Paula Wight, NEWRY PROFILES	\$5
Eva Bean, EAST BETHEL ROAD	\$50
R.H. Bennett, OXFORD COUNTY, MAINE	\$18
William B. Lapham, HISTORY OF BETHEL, 1768-1890	\$45
F.W. Kilbourne, CHRONICLES OF THE WHITE MOUNTAINS	\$20
N.T. True, HISTORY OF BETHEL	\$21

T-Shirts

Moses Mason Museum (Adult) (S,M,L,XL)	\$7
Moses Mason Museum (Child's) (4-6-8-10-12-14)	\$6
Sudbury Canada 1768-1796 (Adult) (S,M,L,XL)	\$7
Sudbury Canada 1768-1796 (Child's) (4-6-8-10-12-14)	\$6

Post Cards: Dr. Mason, Agnes Mason,

Moses Mason House 10¢ ea.

Members of the Bethel Historical Society are entitled to a 10% discount for purchases totaling \$10 or more. Please send orders to the Society at P.O. Box 12, Bethel, Maine 04217. They will be sent by return mail. If you have questions, please call toll free: 1-800-824-2910.

(Old Grover Hill Road, continued from page 3)

which contained a porch on the front portion of the building. Ethel Chapman and her mother, Zella Bryant Smith, lived there for a short while when she was a very young girl and prior to moving across the old road into the larger former David York house. Bob Davis remembers Etta Peterkin, my grandmother, telling about a family, ancestors of the Sweetsters now living in Bethel, who wove and sold baskets, making their home there in the early 1920s. Another recollection mentioned was that Paul Head witnessed his first structure fire when these buildings burned and that the fire engine was pulled by horses, so it places the time in the mid-1920s. Mark Bennett remembered digging old bottles, and even an old gun stock, from the rock-walled cellar hole, some of which remains behind the present mobile home owned by Tim Akers.

An old right-of-way to the former meadows and gardens of Albert Fickett still exists between the old shop area and the third Swain lot, which held an office used by Encon Oil in the 1980s. The structure was removed to the Steam Mill in 1993.

ROBERT AND ROBIN GUNDERSEN

The premises across the old road from the former Lynn Bennett house now belong to Robert and Robin Gundersen. In December 1966, John and Leah Witter and son John, Jr. purchased the parcel of land, with rights to an adjoining mineral spring, from Ruel Swain, who had inherited it from his father's estate. The Witters built the house soon thereafter and resided there until November 1985 when it was sold to John and Kelly Dooen Scott. Rob and Robin, in 1987, bought the place and moved into it in October of that year. They have a daughter and twin sons.

Mark Bennett remembered a log camp situated in the area of the Gundersen driveway in the mid-1940s. The camp was seldom used, but he recalls an uncle, Lee Hanscom, staying there between logging jobs. From 1935 to 1940 it was the home of Harlan and Imogene Kimball.

RUEL SWAIN PROPERTY, WEST SIDE

Parcels of timberland from the Gundersens' to the Grover Hill Road are now owned by Ruel Swain, Roland Annis, Jr., Keith Durgin, and P. H. Chadbourne Co., and have been cut over throughout the years.

Abutting the Gundersen property on the south are two old cellar holes, all that exists of the original Cyrus Harden homestead, built in the early 1830s and on which the family lived until 1853 when they sold to Theodore Verrill for \$475 and moved into Mr. Harden's old home place, now the home of Roland Annis, Jr. The 1858 map of Bethel confirms the Verrill family lived on the site at that time. No record was found of sale by the Verrills. However, a deed dated April 30, 1866, states "the homestead farm near the little brook to land of Cyrus Harden of Jonathan Cross, deceased 1865, was sold by Moses Cross, administrator, by bid to Aaron Cross and Abner Brown." Whether Jonathan Cross obtained the premises after foreclosure on his property at the north end of the old road is not known. The farm, in April 1875, was transferred by Abner Brown to Edwin Gerrish, who is listed on the 1880 map. Wesley Stevens became the new owner of the property in 1892 and sold to David York, father of Ray and Gene and grandfather of Garey, in 1897. Mr. York suffered a stroke, and prior to his death in 1917 tried vainly to make his family understand the location of money hidden in or near the house, but to this day no money has been located.



Among those attending the annual Mason Family Gathering at the Dr. Moses Mason House in July were (left to right): Virginia Hood, Largo, FL; Elizabeth Mason Carter, West Bethel; and Lynne De Mott, Portsmouth, NH.

Ray York, remembered as being a "holy terror" when a young boy, inherited the farm after the death of his mother, Lucinda, in October 1918. The timber rights were held at that time by Alberto Copeland. Ray lived at the old place until a short time after his marriage to Yvonne Brown, Garey York's mother, and prior to a move to Arizona for a couple years as well as upon their return for a short while.

Euberto P. Brown, Yvonne's father, purchased the property, which at that time included considerable land on both sides of the old road, in June 1921. The old red, clapboarded house and barn deteriorated throughout his ownership. Bert rented the property to Guy Willey in the early 1920s, and Ethel Chapman, her mother and ailing grandmother, Augusta Bryant, moved there from the smaller house across the way in 1925.

Fields and apple trees surrounded the entire area, water from a spring on the hill was piped into a barrel in the barn, and there was a frog pond and garden north of the big ledge at the end of the barn, which was the site of Encon Oil tanks from the early 1980s until 1991. The dilapidated old barn was leveled in the late 1920s.

In January 1946 Bert Brown deeded the land and remaining old buildings to Edwin Swain, father of Ruel. They were leveled in the late 1940s. Ruel inherited the old "Brown lot" in March 1960 and now owns extensive timberland encompassing both sides of the old road, which extend past the Roland Annis, Jr. property containing a pie-shaped plot on the west side of the road and the Annis home and land directly across the road, to land owned by Keith Durgin and P. H. Chadbourne located at the south entrance to the old road from Grover Hill.

ROLAND ANNIS, JR.

The mobile home at the northwest corner of the Roland Annis, Jr. property was placed on a concrete foundation in 1974 by Mary Bishop, the late Louise Annis' mother. Louise and Roland ("Oscar") inherited the small mobile home in 1987 and since that time renters have been Cherie Harrington, Barbara Dunham, Debbie and Bernie Michaud, Wendy Bossie, Scott Berry, and Janice Hill.

The Annis' turkey farm, so called because Oscar raises a few turkeys for himself and as pre-Thanksgiving gifts to friends and relatives, encompasses 30-plus acres on the Bethel side of the old road and nine acres of timberland across the road.

In March 1834, John Grover (second son of Jedediah) deeded to "Elijah Harden, Yeoman, 30 acres more or less bounded easterly by Thomas Harden's pasture and stonewall, southwesterly by road, westerly by the Jedediah Cross farm and southerly by Jedediah, Jr.'s land contained in Lot 27 in the 5th range of the original Sudbury Canada land grants." Farm buildings were constructed soon after and additional land acquired from John Grover in 1839. At that time Elijah Harden was listed as a sexton of Bethel. A reference in a Leonard Bond Chapman article indicated that Cyrus Harden sold his farm buildings (later known as the David York place) and moved with his wife Sarah and children to his father's old place (now owned by Roland Annis, Jr.) in 1853. T. Ensworth and Winfield Harden, sons of Cyrus, inherited the farm in 1874 and that same year deeded it to Nathan Ethridge. The property was mortgaged by the Bethel Savings Bank on several occasions. The 1880 map of Bethel shows a C. W. Ethridge living there, and old deeds refer to it as the "Ethridge place."

Ethel Chapman remembers hearing a story of how an elderly Ethridge "went crazy and they came and carried him away. The entire length of the old road he could be heard screaming, 'I've been good to her, I've been good to her, I gave her 50 cents.' "

Records indicate the Bethel Savings Bank foreclosed on the property in 1898, and it was then sold to Alfred Adams, who was manager of Springer's Mill (later Hanover Dowel Co.). A deed recorded May 22, 1920, states that Alfred C. and Mary E. Adams mortgaged to Bethel Savings Bank for the sum of \$2,300 property owned on Spring Street, then known as the "N.F. Brown house and lot" and "my farm lying easterly of the old road leading from the Steam Mill district to Grover Hill..."

In September 1929 Adams sold the farm to Frank P. and Lizzie (known as Linnie) Abbott, Burton Abbott's father and mother, excepting the right-of-way over a parcel of meadow conveyed by Moses E. Grover to Albert W. Fickett in August 1903. He was also given the right to take water, then piped into the house, from a spring contained on land reserved by him. The Abbotts built the present barn in 1930 soon after the original, much larger barn, burned. The current kitchen on the north side was added to the old house at some time. When Oscar and Louise arrived there in 1956, there was a two-holer in the barn, pumped water to the kitchen, and the land was overgrown with small trees. In fact, it was such a discouraging sight that Louise sat in the middle of the kitchen floor and cried, but mustered courage and between them they got to work remodeling the place. They added a bathroom and remodeled the kitchen as their first projects. The entire house and a portion of the barn, where Oscar now has a very efficient wood craft shop, have seen further renovation during their ownership. A nine-acre lot of timber across from their home was also added, making a total of 39-plus acres contained in their property. Two huge maple trees, located on the front lawn, were taken down by Fred Burk in August of 1993, shortly after a large limb had fallen atop the Annis' car while Louise was on her lunch break from Brooks Bros. Oscar retired in 1991 after many years as State Highway foreman in the Newry/Bethel area, and Louise retired September 26, 1993, after 30 years at Brooks Bros., a hardware store located on the Main Street of Bethel. She died November 15, 1993.

Remains of an old World War I rifle range and magazine

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can be found a short distance to the right of the field to the rear of the Annis buildings. Very few people in this area remember or are aware of this old site, or for that matter the actual reasons for its utilization during that time. A mineral spring also exists a short distance into the wooded area at the edge of the field in back of the barn.

A few apple trees remain on the south side of the property across from the barn. These trees were very likely a part of the orchard owned by Charles Mason (listed on the 1858 map of Bethel). The 1880 map of Bethel shows the owner of the orchard to be D.M. Grover. Names associated with this particular parcel of land are: Mason, Grover, Ethridge, Adams, Clark, Blake, Swain. Just recently Walter Clark expressed dismay because his father had sold the old orchard to Ernest ("Red") Blake in the late 1920s. He remembers many bushels of delicious baldwin apples harvested there. This now grown-up land is owned by Ruel Swain and abuts the existing timberland extending to the Grover Hill Road, owned since the early 1940s by P.H. Chadbourne Co.

P. H. CHADBOURNE COMPANY

A short distance up the old dirt road at the crest of the hill on the west side can be found remains of a cellar hole and well, weathered cedar fence posts and gates, signs of where a barn and garden existed across the road, and parts of a bridge abutment located down the hill a short distance near the entrance to the Grover Hill Road. All of this denotes the one-time presence of a large farmstead, which was owned by Jedediah Grover in the late 1790s.

Deacon James Grover sold 100-plus acres in Lot 28, 5th range to Jedediah Grover in December 1794. Lapham's *History of Bethel* contains the contents of a letter written by Lafayette Grover of Oregon, John Grover's grandson and son of the Hon. John Grover, Jr., which states: "James Grover, who with his five sons and three daughters (James, John, Jedediah, Eli, Elijah, Sarah, Olive and Naoma) soon after the close of the Revolution purchased extensive tracts of land in Bethel, Maine..." Other items in the history read as follows: In 1827 "road laid out from old Grover Hill road to road leading to Jedediah Grover's; and another states that in 1839 "...a road accepted from Rufus Grover's to Jedediah Grover's." This places land of the old farm at the Grover Hill entrance of the old road. Several references to the Jedediah Grover farm were found in early deeds at the Registry.

Jedediah Grover, in June 1839, deeded the homestead farm to Polla Rawson of Paris Hill, whose daughter had married a son of Dr. Timothy Carter of Middle Intervale. Samuel Andrews, whose wife was Polly (whether it was formerly Rawson is not known), became owner through mortgage derived from Moses Cross in April 1856. Another mortgage was taken by Abner Davis of Berlin, New Hampshire, in 1858, and the 1858 map of Bethel shows S. Andrews on the site. Gilman Blake, then deputy sheriff, seized the property for a delinquent sum of \$360.95 plus costs in April 1858. David Burnside of Lancaster, New Hampshire, possible speculator of real estate, was the highest bidder at the public auction, and relinquished same in a quit claim deed to Abner Davis, postmaster, in May 1859. William Stuart became the new owner in October 1859 and in 1860 sold to Silas Grover and Jedediah Wheeler. The only other record found was a deed dated July 1, 1862, stating that David M. Grover sold 50 acres of the Jedediah Grover farm to Abner Davis. A partially filled-in cellar hole exists below the old Grover farm, and in 1880

this was the home of David Grover. The buildings burned in 1893. The 1880 map of Bethel does not list property at the site of the old Grover farm. Whatever happened to it is not known at this time. The entire grown-up area on both sides of the old road have belonged to P. H. Chadbourne Co. since 1944.

This concludes the 1993 research of the Old Grover Hill Road. Copies of deeds and more detailed information may be found in the files of the Bethel Historical Society.

BOOK REVIEW

Paris, Maine: The Second Hundred Years 1893-1993. Paris, ME: Paris Cape Historical Society, 1994. Compiled by the Book Committee of the Society. xvi & 1134 pp., illus., extensive appendices, index. \$60 plus \$3 shipping from PCHS, P.O. Box 228, South Paris, ME 04281.

During the 1790s a number of settlements in western Maine were officially incorporated as towns; among these were Buckfield, Canton, Waterford, Bethel, and Paris, the latter designated as the "shire town" for Oxford County when it was created from York and Cumberland counties in 1805. One of the most historic communities in its region, Paris celebrated its past in 1884 when Silas P. Maxim and William B. Lapham combined their efforts in producing the *History of the Town of Paris*. Though demand for that work resulted in a reprint a century later, the need for a more up-to-date account had long been felt, and with the approach of Paris's bicentenary of incorporation in 1993, members of the Paris Cape Historical Society decided that the compilation of a new history was an excellent way to both meet the needs of local historians and genealogists, and honor the town's 200th "birthday." The result of this effort, *Paris, Maine: The Second Hundred Years 1893-1993*, is a voluminous work that through text and photographs provides a fascinating glimpse at this important Maine town.

The latest history of Paris has the great advantage of being an extremely well organized volume, the credit for which goes to the dedicated members of the Book Committee. The first 417 pages of the book are divided into fourteen sections or chapters, each of which presents a comprehensive overview of the following subjects: History; Community Services; Churches (including a section labeled "Area Churches"); Schools; Businesses and Banks; Physicians, Nursing Homes and Ambulance Service; Attorneys-At-Law; Granges and Lodges; Service Organizations; Historical Societies; Finnish History; Poets and Authors; 20th Century Arts and Artists; and Veterans. The great boon to genealogists rests in the next section of the book, which contains well over 500 pages of vital statistics of Paris and area families copied from town reports by Jeannette Clark Clifford. Unavailable in published form for most Maine towns for the twentieth century, these records are arranged by year (from 1901 to 1961) and easily accessed through an extensive, 150-page index at the end of the book. Three other members of the Paris Cape Society reviewed Mrs. Clifford's compilation, assuring that the all-important notations of births, deaths, and marriages were reproduced as accurately as possible in this new book. Following the vital records are shorter but very useful sections listing Paris selectmen and town managers

since 1880, and the serial numbers of World War II veterans.

Paris, Maine: The Second Hundred Years 1893-1993 contains an additional feature that makes this history invaluable to present-day readers: its authors have sought to include information carrying the origins of the town's organizations, churches, schools, families, etc., back well before the 1893 date in its title, thus providing essential background for those less familiar with the community's colorful 18th and 19th century history. As well, an eight-page sketch explaining those events leading up to West Paris's incorporation as a separate town in 1957 appears early on in the book. Although some material about Paris Hill village is incorporated into the text, Committee members purposely avoided duplicating information already available in the book *Portrait of Paris Hill*, published in 1990. The inclusion of several maps, locating many of the sites in the text, would have been another way of enhancing the already fine research carried out by the Book Committee, but this minor criticism aside, *PARIS, MAINE: The Second Hundred Years* will no doubt serve as an essential record of the town and its people for many years to come.

Randall H. Bennett
Curator of Collections
Bethel Historical Society

THE BETHEL SOLDIERS OF '61

(continued from the last issue)

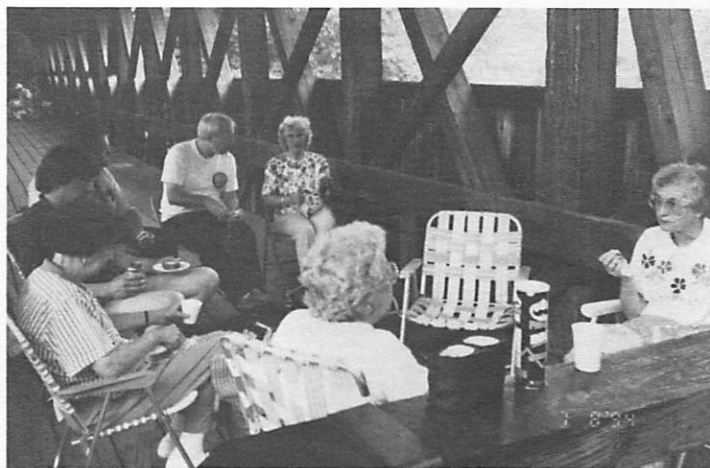
From the pages of the *Oxford County Advertiser*, May 14, 1886, compiled by Judge C. F. Whitman of Norway.

I have yet to meet the soldier who was in the vicinity of Cedar Creek that day who didn't see Sheridan when he rode in among the Union soldiers, from Winchester twenty miles away with his horse white with foam and hear him say: "Face the other way boys, we are going back to our camps."

I haven't read of late that great authority on "historic doubts," but I commend it to all who suppose that absolute accuracy can always be obtained. The effort to attain it often produces the ridiculous.

The following is directly in point: After one of the great fires in the city of New York, where millions of dollars had been destroyed, it was thought proper to apply to Congress for relief, that body being then in session. Accordingly, as the story goes, one of the finest orators in the House was selected to present the matter. He began something as follows: "When the sun went down last night it set on a prosperous city, but when it arose this morning it shone on fifty acres of desolation." At once up rose a member who wanted things no doubt to be absolutely accurate. "Mr. Speaker" he interrupted. "I beg leave to correct the gentleman. It was fifty-two acres and a half." The effect of that interruption may well be imagined. Since I read this incident I have become reconciled to the taking of considerable latitude in telling a story.

The Regt. after the retreat from Bull Run was encamped while in the vicinity of "Bush Hill" near Alexandria, and citizens of that town often visited the camps with supplies of butter, milk, eggs, apple dumplings and almost every-thing eatable.



Following a slide show on the history of the Sunday River Valley, those attending the July Society picnic enjoyed their lunch on the Sunday River Covered Bridge built in 1872.

One member of the Bethel Company, Rufus C. Perley already alluded to, never went hungry when "forage" could be obtained either "by a hook or a crook," but generally by the former methods. At one time a huckster having appeared in camp with a supply of eatables, and while his attention was occupied with other parties, Perley lessened the contents of his egg basket from behind the wagon of some dozen and a half of eggs. Slipping them into his pocket, he went to his tent but a few rods away where a fire was burning to cook his dinner as it was about noon. While eating his repast he discovered that four of the eggs were unsound, and going to the Virginian he began to curse him for selling bad eggs to the soldiers and demanded sound ones in place of those he could not eat. The huckster not knowing the cheat readily complied with the demand. As Perley had an impediment in his speech his demands accompanied with oaths were ludicrous in the extreme, and it was an incident of camp life long to be remembered by those who witnessed it.

In a short time the Regt. changed its place of encampment to what was known as Mt. Eagle, (the camp being called "Vernon,") and was employed for many days in constructing earth works. The Maine men were used to playing the axe, but the New Yorkers who were brigaded with them girdled the trees like beavers. It was dangerous being near them as it was uncertain which way their trees would fall. Gen. Phil. Kearney's Brigade of Jersey men, who also labored on the works, didn't understand the business any better than the New Yorkers. These were all fine men, but being from cities were unused to felling trees. Hundreds of acres of fine oak and hickory timber were laid waste in a very few weeks. One of the largest earth works in the vicinity of Washington was here built. It covered some twenty-seven acres in extent and commanded the approach to Alexandria and the Potomac River for a long distance. The men of the old Fifth Maine did the first work on the fort. They could use the spade as well as the axe. Col. Mark H. Dannell having resigned was discharged from the service by the following special orders:

Headquarters Army of the Potomac, August 29, 1861

Special Order No. 14.

Col. Mark H. Dannell. 5th Reg. Maine Vols, having tendered his resignation, will be regarded as honorably discharged from the military service of the U.S. from August

(continued on page 8)

31, 1861. By Command of Maj. Gen. McClellan
S. Williams. Ass't. Adj't. Gen.

On the 9th of Sept., Col. N.H. Jackson was commissioned as Colonel of the Regt. He was a strict disciplinarian and before the winter was over it was in fine trim. There was considerable dissatisfaction on Col. Jackson's taking command of the Regt. and several of the officers resigned, but Capt. Edwards stuck to his post and was destined to be the officer to lead it on the field of battle where it won its distinction. At this time the Fifth Maine was attached to Gen. W. B. Franklin's Division and Gen. H. W. Slocum was its new brigade commander. This latter officer attained rapid and deserved promotion and led one wing of Sherman's Army on its famous march to the sea. The officer who led the other wing was Gen. O. O. Howard the Regt.'s first Brigade commander.

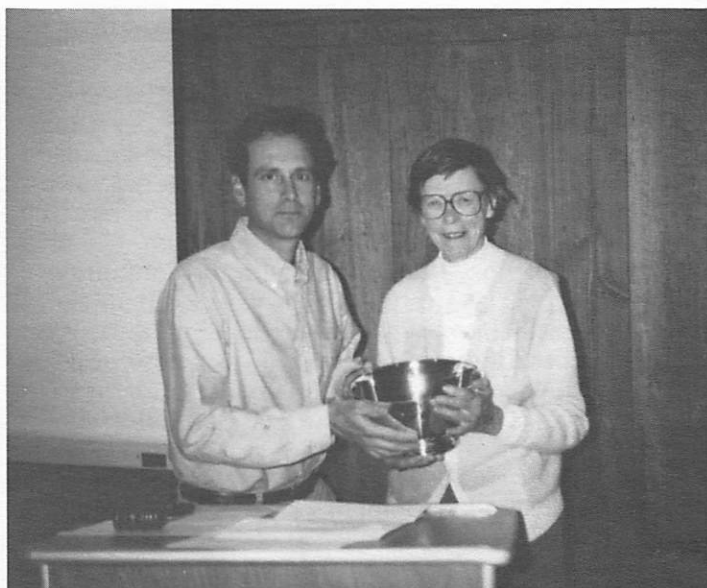
(to be continued in the next issue)

29th ANNUAL MEETING

Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr., director of the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, was the featured speaker at the 29th annual meeting of the Society held on September 1 in the meeting room of the Society's headquarters, the Dr. Moses Mason House. Shettleworth's topic was "People from Away: Mount Desert Island at the Turn of the Century." In his slide presentation, he outlined some of the outsiders, particularly John D. Rockefeller, Jr., who made such important contributions to that section of Maine in the early years of this century.

During the business portion of the meeting, which preceded the program, president Charles Raymond thanked the Special Projects Committee and its head Persis Post for all their work in making the pot luck supper prior to the meeting such a success. He also thanked Barbara H. Brown for her usual attractive flower arrangements for the tables.

President Raymond reported that the Society had lost twelve members since the last annual meeting and called for a moment of silence in their memory: Louise Annis, Philip H. Chadbourne, Richard Davis, Sylvia Ellis, Horton W. Emerson, Jr., Gerald Harrington, Ruby Mott, Anthony Pugliese, Herbert Shirrefs, and Ferroll P. Witter. He reported some of the highlights since the last annual meeting: 72 new members enrolled over sixty donors added to the Society's collections, nearly 300 donors contributed over \$8,000 to the annual fund, successful annual events, including a special program to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the opening of the Dr. Moses Mason House to the public, successful community picnic featuring the Portland Brass Quintet made possible in part from grants from the Maine Arts Commission and the Mahoosuc Arts Council, the 3rd Annual Hall Memorial Lecture featuring Dartmouth College historian Jere Daniell speaking on town founding in New England, many additions to the Society's microfilm/microfiche collection through several generous donors, a well-attended spring genealogical seminar, the hosting last fall of Maine Citizens for Historic Preservation's annual meeting in conjunction with the National Park Service and the National Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Property, the hosting of the Oxford County League of Historical Societies spring meeting with Beverly Kallgren, co-editor of the book *Dear*



President Charles Raymond presents the 1994 Noll Award for Volunteer Service to Margaret Joy Tibbetts, longtime Society Board chairman, at the 29th annual meeting in honor of her many years of service.

Friend Anna: The Civil War Letters of a Common Soldier From Maine, the presentation of the second annual Bethel Historical Society Preservation Award to the Foster family of Sunday River for their outstanding tradition extending over several generations, the selection of three honorary members, the Society's highest membership honor recognizing outstanding service to the organization to Olive Anderson, Rosalind Chapman, and Rodney Howe, the revision of the dues schedule, the receipt of William Bingham's chair from his grand niece, Laurel Blossom, the awarding of the Dr. Moses Mason Award to Angela Szente for her essay "Old Andover Antiquity," and the transcription of the 1920 Bethel and Hanover census records from the microfilm by Society member and Genealogical Committee member Warren Stearns. President Raymond reminded those present that all of the above activities were just some of the highlights and thanked everyone who had volunteered time to the Society for their efforts in making so much progress possible.

Retiring trustee Margaret Joy Tibbetts reported for the Nominating Committee (Arlene Lowell, Kenneth Bohr, Margaret Joy Tibbetts): president, Charles Raymond; vice president, Walter Hatch; secretary and clerk of the trustees, Shireen Vincent; treasurer, Roger Conant; trustee for 3 years, Rebecca Kendall. It was voted to accept without dissent the report of the Nominating Committee.

Society director Stanley R. Howe presented the 1994 Marjorie McArthur Noll Award for outstanding volunteer service to Margaret Joy Tibbetts, retiring chairman of the Board of Trustees. In his remarks, Howe cited her long and active involvement with the Society dating back to the early 1970s following her retirement from the State Department, which included a stint as U.S. Ambassador to Norway. "Without her, much of what we associate with the progress of the Society would have not been possible," Howe observed.

Howe provided details of her service: Society vice-president, president, treasurer, Trustee chairman (in the latter capacity for twenty years). She has worked closely with a number of foundations to gain much needed financial

support for the Society. She has labored for years as the head of the Garden and Grounds Committee and headed the Investment and Finance Committee since its creation in the 1970s. She has read student essays for the Dr. Moses Mason Award since its establishment in 1977. She has provided local history programs, which have always been popular, and in a number of instances these talks have been published in the Society quarterly, THE BETHEL COURIER.

REFLECTIONS OF A HALF CENTURY

(continued from the last issue)

by L. E. Davis

To pick up again the story of business, by 1937 with one mill in Bethel and one at "Pugwash" I needed to find a reliable wholesale lumber market to handle what I could not sell through my local retail outlet.

I had sold considerable lumber in the past to Cleaves in Portland but was not completely satisfied with them. On the first year's out at "Pugwash" I tried a wholesale firm in North Tonawanda, NY, Treat-Manke Co., but didn't prove to be what I wanted. They kicked on the lumber shipped and inspected by their own grader.

I sold the lumber we sawed in 1938 to Burritt Lumber Sales Co. of Bridgeport, CT and continued to sell to them as long as I ran a sawmill.

During the winter of 1938 and 1939, the Federal Government, realizing the disaster in New England caused by the hurricane, formed an organization called the New England Timber Salvage Corporation and furnished it with money to buy and store in ponds and lakes, the timber that was cut from blown down trees. It also authorized buying and having sawed direct from the woods in some areas where there was no suitable water storage.

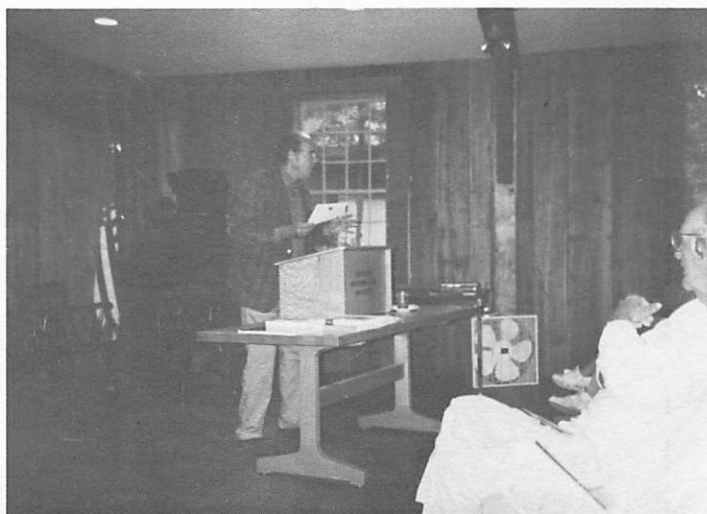
This was an excellent program as the prices established for logs were fair and it stabilized the stumpage price, as well as spreading out the lumber supply by holding part of the logs in storage until demand could take care of them.

I sold some logs from our Bethel lots to them and in the winter of 1939 and 1940 I bought the remainder of the pine on the westerly side of Rapid River in that watershed area for \$2 per thousand stumpage and gave \$4 per thousand for the standing timber to clean the area. In logging this we sold most of the blow down to the Government Salvage Organization and logged the standing timber into a separate boom for our own mill. In the summer of 1940, Jim Barnett bought all the blow down stumpage on the easterly side of Rapid River in Upton and logged and sold to the N.E. Timber Salvage Administration.

The Administration bought and put into storage in Sargent Cove on Umbagog Lake some three million board feet of logs. The Salvage Administration had been opening for bids and sawing and sticking of logs in many of the smaller storage ponds, and I attended the bid openings in Boston of several of these to get informed on what price was being bid, and to get my name on the bidder's listing.

When the bids proposals were offered for the logs in Umbagog Lake and for 1,650,000 board feet of logs in Sturtevant Pond, I put mine in for \$7.25 per thousand board feet to saw and stick and was awarded the contract for both jobs. I had to complete the Sturtevant Pond job in one year but was allowed two years at Umbagog.

This meant that we had to use about all the time of open



Jere Daniell, professor history at Dartmouth College, delivered the Third Annual Memorial Lecture on the subject of town founding in New England as part of the Society's annual Sudbury Canada Days in August.

water there was, as ice did not go out of the lake until about May 5th to 10th and it started freezing again in November.

There was a sawmill at the outlet of Sturtevant Pond owned by Lloyd Flanders who had been sawing there for Langdell and I bought that sawmill of him for \$2200 all set up with an International Diesel Power Unit. We had to rebuild the mill some to comply with requirements of the job but not a great lot. I put Ernest Blake in charge of the Sturtevant Pond job and they sawed out the whole job in about 100 working days. It was a good working mill and we did well on the job. The crew did well too as I paid them a bonus on their production of everything over 14,000 per day. We ran the Umbagog job on the same basis and it worked out very well also.

After the second year, we had the mill at Pugwash and wanted more power so I bought a steam boiler that was in the old corn shop at Bryants Pond for \$100 and set it up with a dutch oven under it to burn wet sawdust and bought the old 65 H.P. Nagle Steam Engine of Mrs. Robinson at Skillington, that used to be in a birch mill at Redding for \$35 and ran both the steam engine and the Catapillar Diesel 8800 power unit driving the main line shaft.

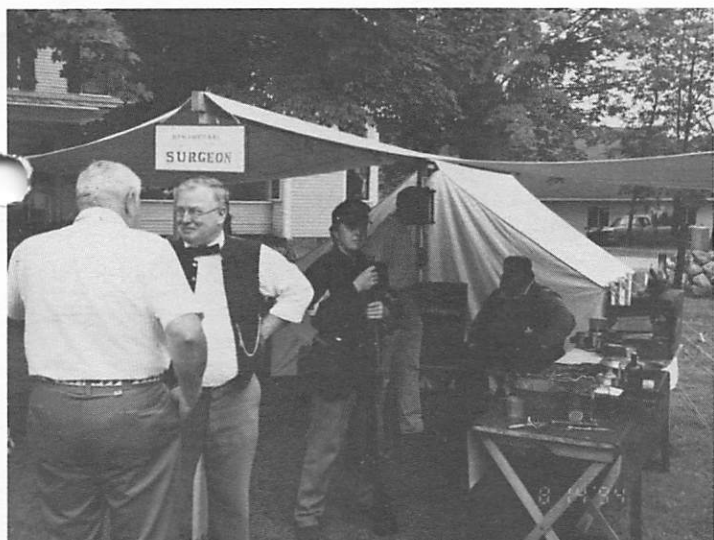
We bought a Soule Twin Engine steam feed for the carriage and had a small steam engine on the slab conveyor. It was quite a "Rube Goldberg" outfit, but we had power.

(to be continued in the next issue)

EDITOR'S CORNER

Once more the *COURIER* is devoted to documenting the history of another section of Bethel. Polly Davis has done a yeoman job of gathering information and presenting some highlights of a portion of the town that has been largely neglected despite the fact that it is among the most historic sections of town, especially in regard to the cemetery.

SRH



Former Society president Alden Kennett (back to camera) talks with members of the Civil War encampment who provided insights into life in the 1860s during the Society's summer heritage festival, Sudbury Canada Days.

IN MEMORIAM

Died, September 9, 1994, Guy P. Butler, Millinocket, patron member since 1971.

Died, October 9, 1994, Louis Paul, Bethel, life member since 1990.

LAST CALL FOR SPONSORS OF RICHARDSON LAKES BOOK

This is the final opportunity for those wishing to become sponsor of the Society's forthcoming book on the Richardson Lakes Region of Maine. For \$100 or more, your name can be listed in the book and you will receive a free copy upon publication, which is expected in 1995. A special flyer, detailing pre-publication information, will be included in the next issue of the *COURIER*. Please send sponsorship checks to the Society at the address listed on page 12.



Speaker for the Community Picnic held on the Fourth of July was Society Board Chairman Margaret Joy Tibbetts, who recalled her childhood memories of the Fourth in the 1920s and 1930s.

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Jane Fife, Salt Lake City, UT

Join the Bethel Historical Society, Western Maine's historical research center.

Membership in the Society entitles you to:

1. free admission to the museum
2. special discounts in the museum store
3. preferred rate for meeting room rental
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5. quarterly publication, *The Bethel Courier*
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___ Life over 55 years (Couple) - \$125

___ Life under 55 years (Individual) - \$150

___ Life under 55 years (Couple) - \$200

___ Individual Preference (any amount over \$10)

___ Corporate - \$50

MEMBER PROFILE

Margaret Joy Tibbetts

Margaret Joy Tibbetts was born in Bethel in 1919 and attended local elementary schools. A 1937 valedictorian of Gould Academy, she received her A.B. degree from Wheaton College in 1941 summa cum laude, and A.M. (1942) and Ph. D. (1944) from Bryn Mawr. Between 1944 and 1971, she was a Foreign Service Officer posted in a number of locations including London, Brussels, and Zaire. In 1964, President Lyndon Johnson appointed her U.S. Ambassador to Norway, where she served until 1969. She retired in 1971 as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs and returned to Bethel.

During 1972-74, she was a visiting professor at Bowdoin College. Since her retirement, she has served on the SAD #44 Board of Directors, the Gould Academy Board of Trustees, and the Board of the Bethel Library, where she was secretary for twenty-one years. She was a member of the Bethel Budget committee for a decade. She served on the Committee on Judicial Responsibility and Disability from 1985-88 and was honored by Westbrook College with the Deborah Morton Award. She has received honorary degrees from Ohio Wesleyan, Bowdoin, Bates, and the University of Maine.

NEW TOLL FREE NUMBER

To make ordering from the sales department easier, to obtain membership information, and to answer any questions, the Society has obtained a toll free telephone number:

1-800-824-2910

SOCIETY OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES

Charles Raymond, President; Walter Hatch, Vice President; Shireen Vincent, Secretary and Clerk of the Trustees; Roger Conant, Treasurer; Trustees: John Head, Olive Anderson, Jane Hosterman, Barbara H. Honkala, Rebecca P. Kendall



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Upper Dam, between Mooselookmeguntic and Upper Richardson Lakes, was originally constructed in the early 1850s and has been greatly enlarged since that time. A saw mill, at left, produced much of the lumber that went into the oldest surviving camps on the Richardsons.

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